



Tracking Resources, Alerts, and Communication for a Better Washington

# Frequently Asked Questions - 2012

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**What is WATrac?** WATrac (Washington System for Tracking Resources, Alerts, and Communication) is a web-based application serving the Washington healthcare system by providing two distinct functions: 1) daily tracking of agency status and bed availability and, 2) incident management and situational awareness during a disaster response.

## **How is WATrac Used During a Disaster Response?**

The system provides a means for notifying healthcare partners of emergency incidents and for supplying situational updates throughout the event. During an incident the daily facility status and bed tracking feature not only provides emergency medical services (EMS) and hospitals with patient transport information, but also automates the process for obtaining bed counts for statewide updates. *Command Center*, for on-line chat and conferencing, provides an easily accessible tool for real time communication within agencies and between healthcare partners.

**What are the Computer Requirements?** WATrac is web-based and will run on any computer with an internet connection, standard web plug-ins, and Adobe Flash 10.0 or newer. Pop-ups must be allowed for the site. Apple computer users with the standard Safari browser can download a version of Adobe Flash Player and access most features in WATrac. iPhone and iPad user's will have more limited access.

**Is WATrac HIPAA Compliant?** The system meets HIPAA security requirements by providing 128-bit encryption for all transmitted data. Access to data is controlled by user permission groups, and strong passwords can be required. The HIPAA requirement for recording who views, updates, or edits records is met only by the *Patient Tracking* module. All other modules and features in WATrac are not HIPAA compliant.

**How is Data Back-up Accomplished?** The WATrac application and data resides on servers in Minneapolis with back-up servers containing duplicate data in Chicago. This service includes dynamic redirection in the event of a server failure.

**What Costs are Associated with WATrac?** The Washington State Department of Health and participating regions, support statewide

implementation using federal funds. This includes funding for 2 FTE's, training, and yearly support and maintenance to host the data on remote servers.

**How is WATrac Managed and Administered?** WATrac is administered and maintained as a partnership between the Washington State Department of Health and Public Health – Seattle & King County. A statewide Advisory Group made up of representatives from healthcare, EMS, and public health provides direction and input for use and implementation of the WATrac system.

**Who Will Have Access to WATrac?** Full system access is currently available to hospitals, EMS, tribal health, community health centers, public health, nursing homes, and in-home service providers throughout Washington State. Additional access is being guided by the WATrac Advisory Group and by resources and staff availability.

**What Changes are Coming?** A *Trauma Specialist Availability* feature helping hospitals to quickly find appropriate trauma surgeons will be available in 2013.

*Patient Tracking* for tracking victims during Mass Casualty Incidents is being piloted for possible statewide launch in 2013.

Representatives of the *Behavioral Health* agencies in Washington are conducting a pilot project to determine how WATrac can best be utilized to assist with situational awareness for mental health and chemical dependency providers statewide.

**Will Training be Available?** During all phases of implementation, training will be available to all regions. A training schedule has been developed and is available in the WATrac newsletter, from the WATrac Regional Leads or by contacting [support@watrac.org](mailto:support@watrac.org).

## **For further information contact:**

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